

Message Text

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43

ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-07 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-03 SS-20

USIA-15 DRC-01 /101 W

----- 107873

R 181500Z APR 74

FM AMEMBASSY BUDAPEST

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1177

INFO AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY PRAGUE

AMEMBASSY WARSAW

C O N F I D E N T I A L BUDAPEST 0952

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, HU

SUBJ: POLITICAL PERSONALITIES AND CHANGE IN HUNGARY

1. SUMMARY: HUNGARIAN UPI REPRESENTATIVE HAS GIVEN FIRST PESSIMISTIC VIEW OF FUTRE CHANGES RESULTING FROM MARCH CC MEETING. HE CLAIMS THERE ALREADY SIGNS OF "TIGHTENING UP" IN CULTURAL FIELD. ACCUSED CZECHS AND EAST GERMANS OF SABOTAGING GOH'S CULTURAL AND ECONOMIC POLICIES. IN REVIEW OF PERSONALITIES HE SAID NEMETH MAY BE ONLY TEMPORARY HEIR-APPARENT, THAT PULLAI TOO DISLIKED TO BE REAL POER FACTOR, AND KOMOCSIN IN FAILING HEALTH. WHILE ANALYSIS MAY BE SOMEWHAT OVERLY PESSIMISTIC, SOURCE HAS FREQUENTLY BEEN CANDID AND REMARKABLY CORRECT ON SEVERAL OCCASIONS. END SUMMARY.

2. UPI REPRESENTATIVE ENDRE SUMEGHY TOLD EMBOFF THAT CHANES ANNOUNCED IN RECENT CC MEETINGS WERE RESULT OF PRESSURE FROM EAST GERMANS AND CZECHS WHO HAVE REPEATEDLY POINTED TO "CREEPING CAPITALISM" IN HUNGARY. THESE CHANGES REPORTEDLY MADE AT RECENT CEMA MEETING AND AT DECEMER MOSCOW IDEOLOGICAL CONFERENCES. SUMEGHY CHARGED OUTSIDE PRESSURE TO SOME EXTENT RESULT OF HUNGARIAN "STUPIDITY"

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FOR BRAGGING ABOUT SUCCESS OF NEM AND "HUNGARIAN METHODS"

IN PRESENCE OF OTHER CEMA MEMBERS.

3. HE CHARGED THAT THERE DIFINITELY WILL BE TIGHTENING UP IN CULTURAL FIELD AND ALTHOUGH PACE WILL BE SLOW, IT WILL BE PERCEPTIBLE IN NEXT FEW WEEKS. HE CLAIMED THAT CONTINUED REASSURANCES TO THE CONTRARY BY PARTY LEADERS AND PRESS IS ATTEMPT TO KEEP SITUATION CALM WHILE CHANGES QUIETLY MADE. AS EVIDENCE, CITED KADAR'S RECENT TRIP TO CZECHOSLOVAKIA. ORDINARILYPRESS WOULD MERELY BE INSTRUCTED TO GIVE "USUAL COVERAGE" BUT THIS TIME NEWS DIRECTORS WERE CALLED IN BY CC SECRETARY GYORI AND GIVEN DETAILED INSTRUCTIONS ON PROVIDING MAXIMUM COVERAGE TO VISIT AND "FRATERNAL RELATIONS". TRIP AND ACCOMPANYING PUBLICITY ALLEGEDLY PART OF KADAR CAMPAIGN TO ALLAY SUSPICIONS OF WP PARTNERS.

4. SUMEGHY CLAIMED THAT NEW CC SECRETARY KAROLY NEMETH SHOULD NT BE CONSIDERED SHOO-IN AS KADAR'S EVENTUAL REPLACEMENT. HE ALLEGEDLY IS SIMPLE, UNINTELLIGENT MAN, WHO IS OBJECT OF MANY LOCAL JOKES -- PARTICULARLY CONCERNING HIS INTELLECTUAL CAPACITY. ONLY THING IN HIS FAVOR IS LACK OF EVIDENT ENEMIES. SUMEHGY SAID NEMETH WILL PROBABLY BE DUMPED AS HEIR-APPARENT FOLLOWING 11TH PARTY CONGRESS IN MARCH 1975.

5. HE CLAIMED ARPAD PULLAI WAS NOT SEROUS POWER CONTENDER; HE IS TOO DISLIKED BY OTHER PARTY LEADERS. HE ALLEGEDLY WEARS UNACCEPTABLY LOUD CLOTHES, IS PUSHY IN HIS RELATIONSHIPS, AND IS CONSIDERED OPPORTUNISTIC WHO WAITS TO SEE WHICH WAY WIND BLOWS BEFORE MOVING. AT PRESENT, HOWEVER HE DOES GIVE OVERALL PARTY SUPERVISION IN FOREIGN POLICY FIELD.

6. ZOLTAN KOMOCSIN IS REPORTEDLY AT PRESENT A "PATHETIC FIGURE", HALF OF HIS FACE IS PERMANENLY PARALYZED AND HIS GENERAL HEALTH FAILING. CONTRARY TO CC COMMUNIQUE, HE WILL NOT HAVE ANY SUPERVISORY ROLE OVER PARTY DAILY NEPSZABADSAG.

7. SUMEGHY ONLY HUNGARIAN WHO HAS GIVEN PESSIMISTIC ANALYSIS OF FUTURE CULTURAL POLICY. HE HAS, HOWEVER, ON SEVERAL OCCASIONSINPAST BEEN QUITE ACCURATE IN HIS CONFIDENTIAL

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ANALYSIS OF INTERNAL ACTIVITIES. ALTHOUGH IT IS DIFFICULT TO VERIFY HIS COMMENTS ON PRESSURE FROM OTHER CEMAMEMBERS, MANY HUNGARIAN JOURNALISTS DO BELIEVE THAT EAST GERMANY AND CZECHOSLOVAKIA HAVE BEEN PUTTING SQUEEZE INDIRECTLY ON HUNGARIANS TO CUB "BOURGEOIS TENDENCIES" AND SHOW MORE FIDELITY TO "SOCIALISM". PEDERSEN

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: BIOGRAPHIC INFORMATION, POLITICAL LEADERS, CENTRAL GOVERNMENT
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 18 APR 1974
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: kelleyw0
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1974BUDAPE00952
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D740090-0722
From: BUDAPEST
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1974/newtext/t19740434/aaaabeau.tel
Line Count: 114
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: kelleyw0
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 19 APR 2002
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <19 APR 2002 by cunninfx>; APPROVED <24-Sep-2002 by kelleyw0>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: POLITICAL PERSONALITIES AND CHANGE IN HUNGARY
TAGS: PINT, HU, (NEMETH, KAROLY), (PULLAI, ARPAD), (KOMOC SIN, ZOLTAN)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005